

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

A regular meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held in the agency conference room on Thursday, September 27, 2007. Present at the meeting were Dr. John B. Susa, Chair, Alton W. Wiley, Jr., Iraida Williams, Camille Vella-Wilkinson and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Alberto Aponte Cardona and Nancy Kolman Ventrone. The meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m.

A motion was made to approve the July 26, 2007 minutes and the special minutes of a meeting held on August 23, 2007 and September 10, 2007. The motion was made by Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson and carried.

Status Report: Michael D. Évora, Executive Director- given by Legal Counsel, Cynthia M. Hiatt

A written report was handed out. All new information was in bold print.

Case Production Report – Attached –

Aged Case Report - Attached

Outreach Report - Attached

STATUS REPORT - COMMISSIONERS-

GENERAL STATUS: No Report

OUTREACH: Commissioner Wiley reported that he is a semi-finalist for a position as judge in Family Court. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that she put together an Adult Remediation Program and tutors will be available for individuals who need them. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson also reported that a diversity job fair will be held on October 10, 2007 at the Algonquin House on Broad Street in Providence from 9 am to 1pm. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson was asked to submit her resume for a position on the board of directors for DARE.

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STATUS REPORT - LEGAL COUNSEL, Cynthia M. Hiatt and Francis A. Gaschen

LITIGATION: report attached.

LEGISLATION: The Commissioners discussed potential legislation to expand the Fair Employment Practices Act provisions to cover

training programs as broadly as Title VII covers them.

REGULATIONS: No discussion at this time.

HEARING SCHEDULE: Discussed

DECISIONS: Discussed

BFOQ Request: Legal Counsel discussed a forthcoming BFOQ request. The Commissioners will review the request once it is submitted in writing.

Timing of Predetermination Conference: Several Commissioners had indicated that a one-hour time frame for a predetermination conference was too short. Other Commissioners were comfortable with the one-hour time frame. The Commissioners decided that the Commissioners uncomfortable with the one-hour time period will experiment with a one and one-half time period.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m. The next regular meeting of the Commission is scheduled for Thursday, October 25, 2007 at 9:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael D. Évora
Executive Director

Notes taken by: B. Ross
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
SEPTEMBER 27, 2007

I. BUDGET

The Commission formally submitted its FY 2008 Revised and FY 2009 Budget Requests to the Governor on September 14. The particulars are as follows:

S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD)

	FY 2008	FY 2008	FY 2009
	(Enacted)	(Rev. Req.)	(Request*)
S	984,197	984,197	885,777
F	404,743	379,190	395,049
T	1,388,940	1,363,387	1,280,826

***The Commission's FY 2009 Budget Request contains a 10% general (state) revenue reduction, as required by the Governor. The**

anticipated impact of this reduction, if it is implemented, is the loss of 2 investigative positions effective July 1, 2008, leaving the Commission at 12.5 FTEs. I incorporated into the budget submission impact statements attesting to the devastating effect such a loss would have on the Commission's ability to carry out its mission. We must now wait and see how the Governor and General Assembly will act on the submitted budgets.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY 2007, as of 8/30/07, according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we have closed 242 co-filed cases. Our FY 2007 contract with EEOC is for 259 cases; we must close 17 more co-filed cases by September 30 to meet the contract. Each case is now payable at \$550.00. (We did not request a downward modification of our contract in July.)

HUD – For FY 07, according to HUD Project Director Angela Lovegrove, we took in 43 new housing charges, 39 of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 45 housing charges, 42 of which were co-filed with HUD.

For FY 08, we have taken in 13 new housing charges, 12 of which are

co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 7 housing charges, 6 of which were co-filed with HUD.

III. PERSONNEL

No activity to report.

IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report

(As is historically the case, the number of outreach activities decreased over the summer months but is expected to increase as the months progress.).

V. GENERAL STATUS

●Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet with individual investigative staff members on a monthly basis to monitor case production.

●Case Closures – Refer to attached report.

●Aged Cases – Refer to attached report. Progress continues to be made on decreasing the aged caseload. The Commission successfully reduced the aged caseload by 63% in federal FY 2007

(from 8 to 3 cases).

•Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 98. We ended FY 07 with approx. 355 cases in inventory. As of 9/11/07, we had a total of 345 cases in inventory.

•National Fair Housing Training Academy (NFHTA) – Angela Lovegrove has completed all five weeks of this mandatory HUD-sponsored (and HUD-funded) training (classes held in Washington D.C.). Frank Gaschen (Housing Supervisor) and Susan Gardner (Housing Backup) completed Week Four this month and will be attending their final week in the Fall or Spring. Since HUD asked that the Commission send up to seven staff who do fair housing-related work to the training, Susan Pracht (Housing Backup/Housing Outreach), Jason Flanders (Housing Outreach) and Zaida Rivera (Housing Outreach) were sent to Week One this month.

•The Commission's investigative and intake staff, along with Frank Gaschen and Zaida Rivera, will attend EEOC-sponsored (and funded) training on Race/Color and Religious Discrimination in Phoenix, AZ during the month of October. Staff will attend these two-day training sessions in groups of 2-3 throughout October, so as not to disrupt the office operation.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments